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GREATER GERMANY IN SOUTH AMERICA.

BY STEPHEN BONSAI.

NEARLY two years have passed since the present Secretary of War declared that the hour was coming when the American people would be forced either to abandon the Monroe Doctrine or to fight for it, adding as an expression of personal opinion that we should never abandon it. This statement, emphasized as it was by a vigorous speech from Senator Lodge pointing more specifically to the development of German colonies as a possible menace to the integrity of Brazil, and consequently as an infringement of the Monroe Doctrine, created, as will be remembered, widespread excitement at the time. Such discussion as followed in the press and in Congress did not go very deep. The profuse protestations which came from Berlin were, as a matter of fact, gladly accepted in Washington, and the question was relegated to the limbo of oblivion.

But to-day—with Baron von Treutler, the German Minister to Brazil, making a tour of the southern provinces, and addressing the German colonists in speeches which the Rio press pronounces to be “impregnated with patriotism and love of the Fatherland across the seas;” with the appearance of a German squadron to be stationed permanently in Caribbean and South-Atlantic waters; with the announcement that the Hansa merchants have completed their commercial conquest of the country by the purchase of all the ships of the Brazilian Lloyd—the time is ripe for a survey of this little known part of the globe, in which our interest is little but our responsibilities are great. That Brazil is alarmed, as it was not at the time of Senator Lodge’s speech, is shown by the statements which were made on October 15th in the Rio Congress, not by a sensationalist, but by a man who is regarded as a conservative in his sphere of political activity, Senhor Barbosa

Lima. After relating the history of the German immigration to Brazil, and commenting upon the most striking features of the commercial and financial supremacy which they exercise throughout the country, he thus summed up the situation:

(1) That the southern states of Brazil are being slowly but surely denationalized;

(2) That the Italians of the province of San Pablo are becoming Brazilians and adopting the Portuguese language, while the Germans everywhere cling to their nationality and language;

(3) That Germans born in the southern states, though Brazilians by law, consider Germany as their Fatherland, and celebrate with great fervor all the German national festivals and anniversaries.

Conditions of life, politically as well as economically speaking, have changed vastly in South America during the past fifty years. Indeed, everything has changed in the Spanish-American republics except our responsibility under the fiat of President Monroe, which has served not only as the palladium of their liberties but, unfortunately, as a shield to some of the most disreputable sharp practice known in diplomatic history. It is undeniable that these changes in South-American conditions have tended to increase our responsibilities a thousand fold.

A glance at the map of this spacious land for which we stand as sponsors will prove a revelation to many. Colonies of Europeans and even of Asiatics—for the Japanese are coming, apparently to stay in Argentina—are springing up in almost every quarter of the empty continent. Lost in the vast extent of the South-American states, these colonists are in a measure governing themselves by laws of their own making, and avoiding as far as possible contact with the customs and the manners of their South-American rulers. That the European colonists come for the most part of races more efficient socially than the South Americans, that they are increasing rapidly in numbers and in wealth, that they bring with them a sense of superiority and show an inclination to maintain their liberties and defend their rights, are considerations upon which we might well bestow more than a passing glance. These altered conditions are fast creating a situation which will have to be resolved. South America in this new guise presents a problem in which, by the automatic working of the Monroe Doctrine, we may any day become seriously involved.

Every day, incidents are occurring in the southern provinces of Brazil, in Venezuela, as well as in other South-American countries, which might serve any time as a pretext for European intervention, and a flagrant breach of international law might at any moment compel us to intervene.

Upon the facts as they are known to-day, we cannot absolve Germany of a desire, almost a determination, to realize her dreams of transmarine empire, and in Southern Brazil conditions are more favorable to the growth of a Greater Germany beyond the seas than in any other quarter of the globe. No one can examine into the status of the German colonies in Southern Brazil, or weigh our responsibilities under that interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine to which Senator Lodge and Mr. Root incline, without being impressed by the conviction that, unless the Monroe Doctrine is abandoned or the German colonies fail of attaining all that they at present promise, we will soon be confronted by a situation that may have an extremely disturbing influence upon our foreign relations.

The immigration of Germans to South Brazil, although in progress for half a century, has hitherto passed almost entirely unnoticed. The eye of the press, whether English, Continental, or American, is not accustomed to rest with frequency upon the continent to the south of us, and the health of Queen Nancy Tucker of Ashanti could always command more space in the newspapers than this wonderful movement which may revolutionize a vast American republic. Africa has been the fashion in the editorial sanctum, as well as in the various Foreign Offices, and to-day Asia is in vogue; but the time has come when some attention may profitably be paid to the transformations of which South America is the scene. We cannot be expected, however, to take a greater interest in their affairs than the South Americans themselves, and it is hardly more than two years since Brazil awoke to the fact that the German colonies, which had been founded for the most part at the expense of the Rio Government, were assuming such proportions as to constitute a danger to Brazilian supremacy. The South-American republics are, indeed, for the most part so extensive, and the difficulties of travel so great, that the politicians of the capitals are but little in touch with the out-lying provinces.

An amusing instance of this ignorance was recently furnished,

when the railroad which the Argentine Government is pushing through Patagonia to Punta Arenas reached the Chubut valley, and there discovered a population of some thirty thousand Welshmen, of whose existence the officials in Buenos Ayres were unaware. These Welsh colonies had grown up in the course of the last twenty years; Welsh was spoken, and the colonists, it would seem, had not the most remote idea that the territory they occupied belonged to the Argentine, until the tax-collectors arrived by the first through train on the new railway. The Welshmen proved equal to the occasion, and immediately despatched as Ambassador to London, with plenary powers, a Mr. Evans, who was authorized to offer the territory to Her Britannic Majesty as a Crown Colony with a local legislature. Mr. Evans arrived in London at an inopportune moment, and his mission apparently attracted attention only in the comic papers, with the result that the Welshmen of Patagonia are paying taxes to the Argentine to-day.

When the danger from the growing numbers and power of the German colonists was recognized, the Rio Government ceased assisting German immigrants, and turned the attention of their agents to enlisting Italians and Spaniards, who, it was thought, would be more easily assimilated with the native population; but the Germans remain and increase amazingly both in numbers and in worldly goods. One of the factors in the situation is, that what we call native Brazilians are a heterogeneous population, with very materialistic views. They seem less animated by the sentiments which we group together under the word "patriotism" than even the Chinese. Indeed, with the Chinese, hatred of the foreign devils might pass muster as love of country; whereas the native Brazilian regards the foreigner who comes to his shores as a very superior being, and, comparatively speaking, this appreciation is apt to be correct. The wealthy and educated Brazilian who visits the European universities and spends his time in Paris (when coffee is fetching a good price), is a thorough citizen of the world. To one of these gentlemen I am indebted for a plan, which, he writes, is generally approved by the planter and commercial classes of his country as offering the only solution of the Brazilian question, and furnishing the only hope that the vast resources of his immense country will ever be developed. This plan is nothing more or less than a

division of his country among the Powers, who, he takes it for granted, are interested financially and politically in its development. "We would all," he writes, "like to see the northern states, Manoa, Amazonas and Pará, pass under the protection of the United States. In the last ten years, millions upon millions of American capital have been invested in these countries. It will never be made to pay until a stable and honest government is provided. We should like to see the country, from Pernambuco to Rio, pass under the control of Great Britain, San Paulo under that of Italy—the population is certainly more than half Italian—and South Brazil under Germany."

The German colonial movement, so generally recognized to-day as a powerful factor in world politics, can be justly ascribed to the personal initiative of a few Hansa merchants. These *Kolonial-menschen* were made much fun of. Even Bismarck cracked jokes at their expense. It was in this connection that he made his famous statement in regard to over-sea colonies; that he would not give the bones of one Pomeranian grenadier for them all. Some years later, I heard him speak in the Reichstag, and he evidently regarded the movement then as far too serious for jesting. Still he protested: "*Ich bin vom Hause aus kein Kolonial-mensch.*" But before his fall, and long before his death, he became convinced that it was of vital importance for Germany to build up transmarine empire, and to pre-empt as far as possible the markets which were still open.

These great merchants of the Hansa cities were inspired by dreams of commercial expansion, some of which have been realized. Still, the movement would never have become a popular one, had not the necessity been seen of diverting from alien lands the great flood of German emigration which, in the early eighties, was fecundating the farthest reaches of the world with a healthy, industrious and altogether desirable population. From 1832 to 1892, 3,000,000 emigrants passed out of the Fatherland through the portals of Bremen. During the same period, 2,000,000 emigrants left by the way of Hamburg. Of emigration through the lesser ports there are no available figures, but the total must have been considerable. In the year 1881 alone, more than 280,000 emigrants left Germany, the great majority settling in the United States. It was the spectacle of this migration by masses that quickened public opinion, and

made it possible for the Government to adopt the energetic and costly colonial policy which Germany has followed undeviatingly down to the present day. It was at this time that the two colonial societies were formed which were amalgamated in Berlin in 1887. This Colonial Gesellschaft is presided over by the Duke of Mecklenburg to whom it was that in 1889 the Emperor addressed a letter so warmly appreciative of the work of the society as to stamp the head of the House of Hohenzollern, if proof were needed, as an ardent believer in the colonial movement. This society now numbers 35,000 members, each of whom pays three dollars a year in dues. The society publishes the *Kolonial Zeitung*, a weekly with 40,000 subscribers, and maintains a permanent Museum of the Colonies in Berlin. It has also promoted a tropical proving ground or *jardin d'essai* in Hamburg, and a school of colonial agriculture in Wilhelmshof, besides founding in many of the colleges chairs for the propagation of colonial knowledge and languages.

The results of the colonial movement have been many and various; there is, however, always one unfailing result, a deficit in the colonial budget. The colonies have never been remunerative, and last year they cost the empire 28,000,000 marks. In return much undesirable real estate has been acquired. Twenty years ago, Germany did not possess an acre of land outside of Europe. To-day, the German colonial flag flies over two million and a half square kilometres of new land, inhabited by 16,000,000 people. In these figures I do not include, of course, the colonies in Brazil or in Palestine, but only the state colonies at present under the flag.

It is often said that the Germans have not been very happy in their colonial selection; but it should be remembered that, before they appeared on the scene as a colonial power, almost all the desirable portions of the temperate zones had been pre-empted by their Anglo-Saxon cousins. It is a curious commentary on the German system of colonization, that, with the possible exception of Shantung, German colonists have succeeded in attaining any measure of prosperity only where state aid has been withdrawn, or, better still, where it has never been extended to them. A careful survey of the field to-day discloses the fact, that, not taking into consideration great political changes—such as the incorporation of Holland and her colonies with the German

Empire, or the partition of China—the best field, perhaps the only field, for the upbuilding of a Greater Germany beyond the sea is furnished by the sparsely settled provinces of Southern Brazil. Of the promising beginnings which have been made in this quarter, an enthusiastic German traveller, Dr. Hermann Leyser, who has recently published a book about Santa Catharina, says:

“Nowhere are our colonies, those loyal offshoots from the mother-root, so promising as here. To-day, in these provinces, over thirty per cent. of the inhabitants are Germans or of German descent, and the ratio of their natural increase far exceeds that of the Portuguese. Surely to us belongs the future of this part of the world, and the key to it all is Santa Catharina, stretching from the harbor of Sao Francisco far into the interior, with its hitherto undeveloped, hardly suspected wealth. Here, indeed, in Southern Brazil, is a rich and healthy land, where the German emigrant may retain his nationality, where for all that is comprised in the word ‘*Germanismus*’ a glorious future smiles.”

The hue and cry that was raised by the South-American press two years ago, when the United States gunboat “Wilmington” sailed up the Amazon and made a survey of the river for a few hundred miles above Manoaas, has only quite recently died away. This cruise, which seemed at the time such an innocent matter to us, certainly gave grave offence to our South-American cousins. It may be, as is rumored, that from this incident date a series of secret treaties between the Powers of central South America which are directed in an almost hostile sense against us, and what we may justly regard as the legitimate expansion of our commercial interests. Whether the story of secret treaties be true or not, it is certain that for the last two years South-American statesmen have been very sensitive to our activity, even when confined undeniably to the walks of trade and commerce. I do not wish to unduly alarm the Rio statesmen, vigilance is far from pleasant in a land where it is always afternoon; but they would be better and more profitably employed if they kept their eyes upon the many German exploring expeditions which are constantly traversing the southern provinces of the vast republic. The information and the scientific data acquired by our “Wilmington” expedition was published broadcast to the world within a month after the return of the gunboat to our waters, but the Germans say little, publish nothing, and accomplish much. It

is also an interesting fact that these expeditions are fitted out and financed almost entirely by the great commercial houses of the Hansa cities. These are the men who have always stood for the forward colonial policy in other parts of the world. To New Guinea and many parts of Africa they sent out a series of so-called scientific expeditions; and, when they found or thought they found conditions favorable to profitable commercial ventures, they have always succeeded in having the Imperial flag placed over the scene of their enterprise.

For the last three years, Dr. Karl von den Steinens has been engaged, under the patronage of the Hansa merchants, in making a series of explorations announced to be of a mixed scientific and commercial character. In this period he has, with German thoroughness, travelled over the whole western hinterland of Matto Grosso and Amazonas. The reported results are meagre, but they cannot be unsatisfactory, otherwise these costly explorations of the copper and the rubber country would be discontinued. The Rio Grande Northwestern railway, a pioneer railway if there ever was one, is being pushed on in the trail of these exploring parties, and another and a larger expedition is announced as about to set out under the same leadership for the Maranhao country, the last home of the vanishing Bugres. The activity of Dr. von den Steinens would bear watching even if it were isolated; but, when taken in connection with other expeditions under the same patronage and with similar aims in view, it compels attention. In 1900, Dr. Herman Meyer, certainly one of the most outspoken pioneers of Greater Germany in South America, reached the top of the Sierra Azul after traversing the Xingu country, and returned to Porto Allegre with the first map of the Ranuro province. A few months ago, Dr. Lanberg returned from a year's exploration in Amazonas, a journey which extended to the very borders of Peru. The spirit in which Dr. Meyer and his colleagues visit these unofficial colonies of their Fatherland, and explore the adjacent countries which give promise of being so rich in those products the world most needs to-day, is not concealed in a statement that Dr. Meyer publishes in a recent number of the "*Kolonial Zeitschrift*." He writes: "The German spirit is ineradicably grounded in the hearts of these colonists and it will undoubtedly bear fruit, perhaps a rich harvest which will not only prove a blessing to the colonies but to the Fatherland."

While the number of immigrants from the Fatherland is decreasing, the natural increase of the population in the established colonies is something almost fabulous. Blumenau, one of the original colonies, more than doubles itself every ten years, and has now attained the very respectable population, for a town, of 45,000 souls. It carries on considerable commerce with Germany, one item of which is 8,000,000 marks' worth of cigarettes yearly, without mentioning the value of the leaf tobacco exported. In none of these colonies do the Germans seem to be greatly isolated. As in America, so in Brazil, the Germans do not appear as a pioneer population. They leave frontier work to the Poles who, in the highlands of Lucena, are subject to attack and are often massacred by the Bugres. The Germans live for the most part on their prosperous *parcerias* adjacent to towns, or upon cattle ranches, and rarely fail to raise families of from ten to fifteen children. They subsist upon a wholesome diet of black beans, flour of manioc and Xarque, jerked beef dried in the sun; but now luxuries which may tend to decrease the patriarchal size of families are appearing on the primeval scene. I find in a recent number of the *Kolonial Zeitung* the following enthusiastic announcement. "When in 1898 I visited Hansa in Santa Catharina, I had to quench my thirst with draughts of crystal water. Now three varieties of excellent beer, brewed on the spot, are at the traveller's disposal."

In view of these facts, which are frequently emphasized by gross exaggerations of the situation, it is not surprising that the Rio statesmen should view with ever increasing anxiety the course of events in the southern states of the great federal republic. It is clear that the danger does not spring entirely from the increase of the German population and their prosperity, but is enhanced by the undeniable power of assimilation which they exercise over their neighbors, whether they be members of the Polish, Roumanian, or even Italian and Portuguese communities by which they are surrounded. To offset this general rule, there are one or two notable exceptions. It is pointed out that Felipe Schmitt, the Governor of Rio Grande, though the grandson of a German immigrant, can hardly speak German, and that Lauro Muller, who represents this state in the federal Senate, is absolutely ignorant of the language of his parents. The danger of the situation was well summed up in a speech delivered only a few

months ago by Dr. Murtinho, the most eminent publicist in Brazil, who has at various times held almost every office in the gift of the Rio Government. In his speech, which has been widely circulated and has caused a profound sensation, he calls upon his fellow-countrymen to stand shoulder to shoulder in defense of their threatened nationality. He dwells upon the great danger they run of denationalization, admitting frankly that the native-born population is neither numerically nor intellectually capable of assimilating the large number of emigrants of a superior race that are pouring in upon the shores of Brazil.

Such, then, in slight outline, is the story of German expansion in South America. It has taken place without the assistance of the Berlin Government, and indeed until 1896 greater obstacles were placed by the German authorities in the way of those who wished to emigrate to Brazil than to those proposing to emigrate to other countries, though, of course, this is changed now. By a conservative estimate, the German inhabitants of "Greater Germany" do not number more than four hundred thousand, and many of these so-called Germans are really Swiss, Austrians and Poles. Certainly, it does not seem a very alarming picture, especially when we recall the fact that the Rio Grande of the South and the Bay of Sao Francisco, upon which the German colonies are settled, are twice as distant from our shores as are the banks of the Elbe and the Weser from which they come. And, indeed, were it not for the possible, in fact almost inevitable, complications to which we are exposed under the Monroe Doctrine, we could afford to view the growth of these prosperous and well-regulated colonies with equanimity if not with approval.

I cannot but add that I have never met an Englishman, a European, or an American domiciled in South America who regarded the pacific development of Germany in South Brazil with feelings of hostility. To many, as to myself, these well-ordered, prosperous communities have always appeared pregnant with hope for the future of the neglected continent, as oases of activity and industry in a dreary desert of intrigue and corruption that stretches almost without interruption or exception from Panama to Cape Horn.

STEPHEN BONSAI..